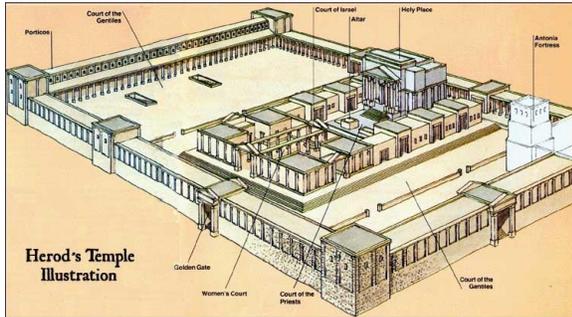


Why Church? Matthew 21:12-17



Matthew 21:12-17

12 Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.

13 And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" (Jeremiah 7:11)

Jeremiah 7:11

11 Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the Lord.

NKJV

14 Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.

15 But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant

16 and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise'?" (Psalm 8:2)

Psalms 8:2

2 Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have ordained strength, because of your enemies, that you may silence the enemy and the avenger.

NKJV

17 Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.

NKJV

In the Old Covenant, the temple in Jerusalem was the hot spot of God's presence on the earth. It was His spot to live among the Jews.

When the Jews were cooperating with God and His Word, the temple was a place where you could receive incredible blessings.

- **A house of purification (verse 12)**

Freedom from guilt and the condemnation of sin. It was a place where you could experience the peace of God.

- [A house of prayer \(verse 13\)](#)
God promised to hear, and answer prayers made at the temple. It was a place where you could experience hope.
- [A house of power \(verse 14\)](#)
Healing, financial provision, prophecy, etc. It was a place where you could experience restoration.
- [A house of praise \(verses 15-16\)](#)
There was perpetual praise and worship at the temple. It was a place where you could experience joy.

It must have been disheartening to Jesus to see what the temple had become. He called it a den of thieves. Even as the Jewish religious leaders continued going through the motions of their religion, they were oppressing the needy and taking what was not theirs. A den of thieves is any place that thieves frequent and feel comfortable.

Jesus drove them all out. He was being merciful. They all deserved to be slaughtered by the power of God.

A week later Jesus was crucified. In His death, He established a New Covenant between God and mankind. The word covenant means agreement.

The old agreement was between God and the Jews. The new covenant is between God and mankind.

In this new agreement, Jesus provided a new way for sins to be forgiven.

Jesus said if you repent of your sins and believe in Him, your sins will be pardoned.
(Matthew 26:28)

[Matthew 26:28](#)

[28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.](#)

[NKJV](#)

In this new agreement, Jesus built a new temple. (Matthew 16:18)

[Matthew 16:18](#)

[18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.](#)

[NKJV](#)

Jesus called the new temple my church.

There are some significant differences between the temple in the old agreement and the temple in the new agreement.

The differences...

1. The temple in the new agreement is a group of people.

(1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 1 Peter 2:5)

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

NKJV

Jesus called the new temple, His church. (Matthew 16:18) The church is the hot spot of God's presence on the earth. The church is His spot to live on the earth.

The church is not a building. The church is not an event. The church is a group of people. In 1 Peter 2:5, Peter called members of the church living stones.

The temple in the new agreement is a group of people.

2. The temple in the new agreement is a group of people that exist to fulfill Jesus's mission. (Matthew 4:19; Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2)

Jesus's mission for the church is not to make sacrifices.

Jesus's mission for the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who made the sacrifice.

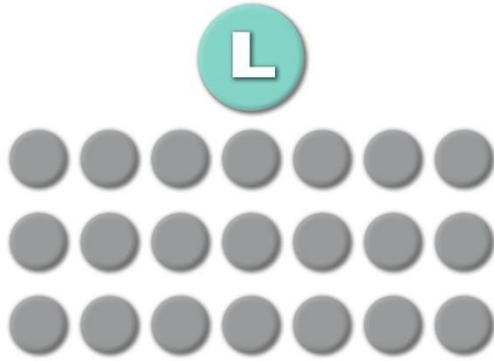
The temple in the new agreement is a group of people that exist to fulfill Jesus's mission.

3. The temple in the new agreement is a group of people that exist to fulfill Jesus's mission, Jesus's way. (Luke 6:13)

Jesus showed the church God's way to make disciples when he chose 12 men to be His first disciples

They shared life together. They shared truth together. They shared love together.





The temple in the new agreement is a group of people that should unite together to fulfill Jesus's mission, Jesus's way.



When the church is cooperating with God and His Word, the church is filled with God's glory and it becomes an incredible blessing to people on earth. It is....

- A house of prayer
- A house of purification
- A house of power
- A house of praise

According to biblical prophecy, there will come a time when the temple of Jerusalem will be restored, and Jesus will rule the world from that temple.

[Jeremiah 3:17](#)

[17 "At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts.](#)

[NKJV](#)

Until that time comes, we are the temple of God on earth.

In the old covenant temple, the leaders of the temple rejected God's mission for the temple and they rejected His way to run the temple.

In the new covenant temple, have we rejected Jesus's mission for the temple and His way to run the temple?

Jesus promised if we will embrace His mission and do things His way, the gates of hell will not prevail against the church. (Matthew 16:18)

If we are His church, the church will be...

- A house of purification
- A house of prayer
- A house of power
- A house of praise

Why Church?

Because we are the temple of God

Will you receive the new agreement God has made with mankind through Jesus?

Will you dedicate yourself to be a member of the temple of God on earth today?

Will you surrender to His plan for you in His temple?